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Title: Need to introduce Rehabilitation Package for Indians returned from Libya.

SHRI ANTO ANTONY (PATHANAMATHITTA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I request the Government to kindly introduce appropriate rehabilitation schemes for NRI returnees from Libya and take immediate steps to issue passports to the holders of out-pass.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government for its meritorious initiatives to safely repatriate all our nationals who wish to return to India. Through 'Operation Safe Homecoming', about 16,200 NRIs have been brought back to India within a short span of time. This type of large-scale evacuation has happened for the first time in world History. On behalf of the NRI community, I express my sincere gratitude to the hon. Prime Minister, the hon. Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, Shri Vayalar Ravi, the hon. Minister of External Affairs, Shri S.M. Krishna, and our Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri E. Ahamed, for making tremendous efforts in this regard. The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs is also in discussions with the Ministry of Human Resources Development and various State Governments to facilitate school and college education for the children of the NRI returnees from Libya.

I take this opportunity to inform the Government that the NRI returnees from Libya are left in the lurch, because they have already lost their jobs. Financial crisis coupled with uncertainties about the job prospects put their lives into deep stress. Therefore, I request the Government to kindly introduce proper schemes for these returnees so that they can overcome the present crisis they face. Moreover, I appeal to the Government to take urgent steps to ensure safety of the properties and assets of the NRIs which were left in Libya during the exodus to India.

It is learnt that the NRI returnees from Libya are facing problems in getting new passports. Even though they have out-passes, they have to wait for three months for getting new passports. This will adversely affect their overseas job prospects. Therefore, I would also request the Government to kindly direct the passport offices to issue passports urgently to the NRIs having out-passes. Thank you very much.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): I would just like to respond to the hon. Member's concern. The Ministry of External Affairs has already issued instructions to all the Regional Passport Offices – I was a part of the evacuation efforts – that they should extend all possible help in respect of passports to all those who have come back. I just would like to inform the House that the Prime Minister is overseeing and also monitoring all the efforts of the Ministry of External Affairs in this respect.

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